

The Times-Dispatch

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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 1904.

Investigating Committee's Report.

The report of the Investigating Committee of the Council has been made public, and Richmond has small grounds for self-complacency over the result. Desire to do no one an injustice, and to state nothing that was not borne out by carefully weighed and sifted evidence is a striking characteristic of the report. This very caution and temperance is what lends the greatest weight and adds the greatest severity to the calm summing up by the Investigating Committee of the present state of the public conscience.

In only a partial statement of the case to point out that the Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Company found ready recipients in the Council for the hospitality that it provided in its mid-day lunches, its cheering suppers, its enlightening trips to New York, and the pleasant companionship of paid workers, all of which amounted to the trivial sum of \$17,000, to say nothing of the slight and almost negligible perquisites of free local and long distance telephone services.

Nor will it cover the entire field to add to this exhibit the record of the street car companies. It is at least instructive to have the testimony of the Investigating Committee that the Passenger and Power Company through George E. Fisher, spent some \$10,000 among "political workers" to "create public sentiment," of which \$5,000 went to one man; that Captain Andrew Pizzini gave contracts to members of the Council without competitive bidding, and that the Trac-tion Company, though carefully safeguarding its conscience by stipulating that no improper use should be made of the funds, yet managed to spend \$5,000 among these political workers for "legitimate" expenses, as the report says.

To get the full significance of the report we must not overlook what it says of those private citizens who for a consideration of the face value of \$20,000 in stocks and bonds, sold the use of their names and influence to secure for George E. Fisher, "a man," who, the report says, "the public believe, had always evaded his just obligations to the city," which franchise it was well known the citizens of Richmond would not have permitted him knowingly to obtain—while violating no statute, were, to a certain extent, befuddling the confidence reposed in them by their fellow citizens, and have by their example weakened the moral strength of the community and afforded a ready excuse for those who, for a consideration, are willing to subordinate the public weal to private interest. One of the political workers employed to "create public sentiment" in favor of one of the corporations stated on the witness stand that he had declined such employment frequently, but that when he saw representative citizens accepting compensation for the use of their names and influence in securing franchises, he did not see why he should any longer refuse money for his political influence.

"The private citizen, no less than the public official, owes to the community in which he lives the best exercise of his political influence and, when he accepts compensation for the use of that influence in any particular direction he does an injury both to himself and the public."

"That tells the whole story. The public conscience has been dulled, and we can never get pure and unadorned service from our representatives when citizens in their private lives are showing a like disregard of patriotism and an equal venality."

It is well enough to have our house cleaning—and to severely reprimand, and punish, where the evidence is sufficient, all dereliction and corruption in public officials—but what Richmond needs most to lay to heart is the dispassionate report and earnest appeal of the Investigating Committee, and so set herself to bring about such an awakening of public conscience and civic righteousness as will forever free us from the occasion of such another rebuke.

Important Duty.

The police commissioners of this city have appointed a committee of two of their members to act with the chief of police in carrying out the request of the City Council in reference to the safety of audiences in places of amusement.

This is well, but we hope the terms of the Council's resolutions include school buildings and public halls generally.

overlook the fact that there have been, in this country, some very serious accidents from panics in school buildings.

This committee of investigation have a very responsible duty upon their shoulders. It may be disagreeable also, but the American people would be the greatest fools on earth if they did not profit by the costly lesson of the Chicago fire and make the best possible provision for the safety of audiences against fire and panic.

Yes; all State and city authorities should do their duty thoroughly and fearlessly, and, in case of doubt, they should give the public the benefit of that doubt.

A Wattersonian Deliverance.

The Hon. Henry Watterson, the Kentucky oracle; the tooter of the ram's horn on the outer ramparts of advanced and vigorous Democracy, as he would be pleased to style himself, is not entirely pleased with all of the things that were said and done at the recent McClellan dinner in New York.

Although we saw a list of the able and distinguished statesmen who were honored with the privilege of a plate at that now famous layout, we do not remember that the name of Mr. Watterson appeared upon it. We think, however, that as a matter of courtesy he was honored with a kind of perfunctory "invited," which the inviters very well know he would not accept, and he didn't.

But be all that as it may, the blower of the ram's horn was a very careful reader of the published proceedings of the hilarious New York gathering, and he has not hesitated to put his views of it all in cold and convincing type. Of course, the leaded columns of the Louisville Courier-Journal from the medium through which the tooting of the ram's horn pierces the ear of the listening American public, and from these columns we propose to quote somewhat liberally, at least liberally enough to show that Colonel Watterson is of the opinion that the Hon. Richard Olney made a great mistake, when in his speech at the McClellan dinner, he sounded what seemed to be a Cleveland chord, and did not whoop up young McClellan for the presidency. But let us quote a note or two from the tooting of the ram's horn. Colonel Watterson says:

"The dinner seems to have been a performance of 'Hamlet,' with the part of the prince by proxy, or, as the bills might have read, 'Done by a gentleman of the court circle,' with Mr. Hill for first grave digger and Mr. McKelway for Polonius. Mr. McClellan, the real prince, had scarce his belongings, and yet the company was not complete without Mr. Cleveland. However, Richard Olney made a good double."

Colonel Watterson then proceeds to show, at least to his own satisfaction, that Mr. Olney was bound to know this utter absurdity of a fourth nomination for Mr. Cleveland, and, therefore, had an opportunity to make a very much better speech than he did make, which better speech the Kentucky man undertakes to put into the mouth of the Massachusetts man after the manner following, says Mr. Watterson:

"It might so easily have been otherwise. The territory between the sublime and the obsequious is so slight that had Mr. Olney been a courtier instead of a hero, a self-seeker worshipping the rising sun and not a mystic dreaming in the moonlight—in a word, were he a man capable of getting down to bedrock and playing practical politics, he had turned to the young Napoleon of Tammany, and addressing him thus:

"Son of an illustrious sire, your time has come at last; forty years of history looks down upon you; Antietam lives again in George B. Gird up thy loins, and go after Teddy. I, myself, am too stiff of joint, and Gorman is too nimble. Hill and Parker are too sick abed, and Delaware is not quite big enough to name a President. But thou, child of battle, the fairly godmother bending above thy cradle gave thee every grace, including good fortune; the stars in their courses fight for thee. Go in, thou bully boy with brass booties, and let the people say which of the two Kluckerbucker cubs shall rule, thee or Thee."

"And then they all took a drink, and the picture of St. Jackson on the wall exclaimed: 'By the eternal, and the next day, when it tried to snow, the 8th of January, looked for all the world like the Fourth of July.'

Now, there you are. If that isn't a Wattersonian deliverance, what is it? And time may demonstrate the fact that there can be wisdom in a Wattersonian deliverance.

The Police.

The Board of Police Commissioners are making a very earnest effort to improve the efficiency of the force, and in this work they have the hearty sympathy and support of the community. Of course, all they desire and hope to do cannot be done at once. They must move slowly and systematically. And to some extent, the changes they make must be experimental, but we have faith that they are proceeding in the right direction and with a due sense of their responsibility.

The innovation they now make is to redistrict the city by reducing the number of police districts from three to two, and by creating the office of police inspector.

The duties of the inspector will be to see that the officers and members of the force are faithfully performing their duties, and that the laws of the State and city are not violated. And the inspector will be required to perform such other duties as may be designated by the board or the chief.

equipped and employed and another sergeant appointed.

At the first glance, it would appear, that there is to be a division of responsibility between the chief and the inspector, but we dare say the board has considered that matter and studied the systems which are in operation in other places. At any rate, it can do no great harm to make the experiment.

Changes in municipal systems are always more or less experimental. The community would be forever moving in one groove, if none were ever ventured upon.

The crying need of the city is for more men to do patrol duty. We presume the changes in question will be advantageous in that direction also, and further relief may be expected by the addition of ten men to the force, as is proposed.

Already there is an improvement in police organization and activity, and the board are working along lines which no doubt will produce other good results.

A Woman's Way.

Mrs. Jack Gardner, of Boston, is a woman who will have her way, but it will cost her \$100,000 to do so.

She has imported, or arranged to import, sculpture and paintings to the value of about one million dollars. Such of them as have arrived have come in "duty free," as it was understood that she intended to open a public museum. Recently, however, Mrs. Gardner found that the demands of the people were such that she could not comply with them, so, rather than have her museum closed as a public institution and open to everybody, she resolved to pay the duty from which she had been exempted. This change of mind—this determination on her part—will cost her about \$100,000.

By her new plan, she will permit a limited number of holders of tickets (which can be secured for \$1 each) to visit the museum on eight specified days during the next two months.

Mrs. Gardner is a rich widow, and society leader. She bought a palace in Florence, Italy, some years ago, and had it shipped to Boston, stone by stone, and re-erected there. Extensive gardens have been laid out about it, and in the building have been hung paintings gathered from all quarters of the earth. One of these is "The Madonna of Thorns," which cost her \$150,000; another is a great painting by Botticelli, bought of Prince Chigi (who was selling by the Italian government for felling it), and which brought him \$65,000.

The palace, which Mrs. Gardner has re-erected in Boston, was originally built about four hundred years ago, when Florence was at the height of its splendor.

The Maryland senatorship contest continues to be warm and excited. It is Mr. McComas' successor that is to be chosen, and the two most prominent candidates are Isadore Rayner and Governor Smith.

Mr. Gorman and the "organization" are believed to be opposed to Mr. Rayner, and it is said that if ex-Governor Smith cannot beat Rayner, some other Democrat who can poll more votes will be taken up.

It is a question whether the votes to be taken in the Democratic caucus will be open or secret. The Rayner men favor an open ballot. They oppose any secrecy whatever.

The Richmond Times-Dispatch is in a congratulatory mood over the fact that it is "kept moderately sober." What is the condition of a man "moderately sober"? We have thought a man was sober, drunk or sober. He may be moderately drunk, very drunk or dead drunk, but we do not see how he can be moderately sober. He is either sober or not. But there is every degree of drunkenness—Louisville style.

A Kentucky paper ought to be authorized on this subject and so we surrender the case, and accept the verdict.



HERMES 2 FOR 25c

THEY STAND THE LAUNDRY

LEIGH & STRAUSS, MAKERS.

Half Hour With Virginia Editors.

The Harrisonburg News opens up a strictly business campaign with this enquiry:

Do the people of Harrisonburg—the people who own property and who do business in the town—realize the importance of securing the location here of the new State female normal school which is about to be established somewhere in Virginia?

The Petersburg Index-Appeal, from its bomb-proof citadel, exclaims: Who's afraid of leap year? Certainly not the fellow who is able and willing to support a wife, and leap year was not intended for any one else!

Discussing the Panama question in all its phases, the Charlottesville Chronicle concludes: The Democratic party ought to make rational capital out of this Rooseveltian campaign.

The salt water towns, now that the Jamestown Exposition is an assured fact, are beginning to get a trifle jealous of each other. For instance, the Newport News Press says:

At our Norfolk friends and contemporaries have a patriotic desire to make the Jamestown Exposition successful in the highest and broadest sense of that word, they should set about it, and in the building have been hung paintings gathered from all quarters of the earth. One of these is "The Madonna of Thorns," which cost her \$150,000; another is a great painting by Botticelli, bought of Prince Chigi (who was selling by the Italian government for felling it), and which brought him \$65,000.

Here is the way the Norfolk Ledger looks at the Democratic situation: Mr. Olney, of course, knows that it doesn't hurt his own chances for him to keep the country's eye centered for awhile longer on Mr. Cleveland—and turned away from other schools of Democracy. Cleveland is out of the question, and Olney stands next to head in the Cleveland class.

With a Comment or Two.

It has developed that a gang of swindlers sold an entire county in Indiana, Richmond had better wake up. That gang may be coming this way—Norfolk Dispatch.

We hardly know what our esteemed contemporary is warning Richmond against, but possibly the gang referred to has some business connection with a gang that once sold a swamp site for a Norfolk shipyard.

Governor Beckham, of Kentucky, is indignant over the numerous reports of the late report of the Governor that human life is not safe in that State. He tells the Legislature that such enemies of the State should be punished for their slanders. He should be.

The effort to punish such "slandermen" would keep the Governor mighty busy making out requisitions on brother Governors.

The Richmond Times-Dispatch is in a congratulatory mood over the fact that it is "kept moderately sober." What is the condition of a man "moderately sober"? We have thought a man was sober, drunk or sober. He may be moderately drunk, very drunk or dead drunk, but we do not see how he can be moderately sober. He is either sober or not. But there is every degree of drunkenness—Louisville style.

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY HAS ADJOURNED

(Continued from First Page.)

ference report on the bill and its 113 amendments was made to the two houses each by the respective speaker. The bill was then read by the speaker of the Senate, and the report adopted by each house without debate or delay. Then ensued the wait until the bill of 80 printed pages could be enrolled and verified, and at 10:45 the two houses convened, and the bill, as enrolled, was read by the presiding officers. Then the General Assembly was ready to adjourn.

The only other bill ordered to conference was the Edmondson senate redistricting bill, and that was never reported to the conference committee, dying in the hands of the conferees.

Right of Eminent Domain.

The bill in relation to the right of eminent domain is one of the most important passed at the session, prescribing the terms and conditions on which railways and other corporations may acquire property, and the bill, as amended, was read by the speaker of the Senate, and the report adopted by each house without debate or delay. Then ensued the wait until the bill of 80 printed pages could be enrolled and verified, and at 10:45 the two houses convened, and the bill, as enrolled, was read by the presiding officers. Then the General Assembly was ready to adjourn.

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even the more important amendments finally agreed to, with one or two exceptions. The bill is substantially an enactment following closely the lines of the corporation article of the new Constitution, relating to the management and control of railways, toll roads, telegraph and telephone companies, steamship and express companies, and provides for all contingencies and questions that may arise. In the opinion of many of the conferees, it is a very important measure, and it is the power conveyed by the corporation article of that instrument. The statutory enactment are necessarily in most part practically the same. Perhaps the most important amendments agreed to was one which permits railroads to use the trucks and rights of way of another when in the discretion of the Corporation Commission the public service and interests require it. The Senate bill allowed the use of tracks of another railway in mountain passes where there were great natural barriers, and building another line. Mr. Anderson, of Richmond, made an unsuccessful fight on the floor of the Senate to have this privilege extended, so that railways may use each other's lines generally in the discretion of the Corporation Commission. When the public service in their view demands it. Mr. Walker made the fight for this amendment in the Conference Committee and won it, though Mr. Anderson shares in the credit for it.

Many of the other changes made in this bill are immaterial, or are slight changes of phraseology. There is nothing else radical in the bill. Mr. Duke made a strenuous struggle to amend the bill requiring telephone companies to give consensual service in the transmission of messages from one person to another. The Senate killed it. The conferees sustained the Senate in this action.

These are the principal features of the last day's session of the Assembly of 1903-'04. The Edmondson road bill had passed both houses with amendments, but the conferees could not get together on these, and so left the bill as a legacy to the new General Assembly.

THE DAY IN DETAIL.

Many Sessions and Much Waiting by Both Branches.

When the Senate convened at noon, there were thirty-two members present. Several bills were communicated from the House, and President William introduced a number of bills that have passed both houses.

The passage of the resolution by the House, in relation to urging members of Congress to support the Brownlow bill for improvement of the public service, and a long and provoked considerable debate. Mr. Shackelford, of Orange, advocated the resolution, and Mr. Barksdale, of Halifax, opposed it. Finally, on Mr. Walker's resolution, the joint resolution was referred to the Committee for Roads and Internal Navigation. That means the end of the matter for the present session.

Mr. Duke communicated to the Senate the non-concurrence of the House in the Senate amendments to the bill in relation to public service corporations, and asked for a conference. The Senate acceded to the request, and Messrs. McIlwaine, Mann and Walker were named as the conferees on the part of the Senate.

The report of the Conference Committee on the disagreeing votes of the two houses on the Senate amendments to the bill in relation to the right of eminent domain was made to the Senate and the report was adopted.

Owing to the fact that the conferees were busy on the bill, in relation to public service corporations, and that there was nothing else before the Senate, a recess was taken until 3:30 o'clock. At that hour the conference met, having completed its work, and the conferees were again convened.

The Senate convened several times during the afternoon and evening. This was necessary by the fact that the conferees were at work on the bill, in relation to public service corporations, and that the summary of the points of agreement had been made. The report of the conferees was adopted by the Senate.

Mr. Anderson took occasion to say to the senator from Patrick, Mr. Harvey, that he noted with pleasure that the latter had voted for the adoption of the bill, in relation to the right of eminent domain, and that when he could not get all he wished he accepted what he could get. A half hour was better than no hour at all.

Then ensued another intermission, until the bill just agreed upon finally was enrolled. Upstairs Judge V. S. Gooch and the law force of rapid motion were at work, drafting the bill, and others were reading proof and verifying it as far as pages were written. It was ready at 10:45. Mr. Anderson took the bill, and the conferees were again convened.

The Senate then awaited the pleasure of the House. The House communicated a joint resolution expressing its assent to the adoption of the bill, in relation to the right of eminent domain, and the Senate acceded to the request, and Messrs. McIlwaine, Mann and Walker were named as the conferees on the part of the Senate.

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THE NEW CHINA STORE.

A FEW OF OUR MANY SPECIALS.